

# Leading from Within

## CRF 2013 Programme



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Exceptional Leaders for  
Exceptional Times



# *The Science in Leader Development*



## Performance Excellence

Performance excellence is about *performing at your very best when it matters the most* – and it matters the most in critical situations where one action changes everything! Knowing what that is and when to do it is the key to success in work and life. Performance excellence is learned. But most performance training today falls short and is too narrow in focus to enable lifelong learning to be achieved and for an individual to develop “on command” exceptional leader behaviors.

We at APEX have adapted the U.S. Army’s leader development model, commonly referred to as **BE-KNOW-DO**, as a framework for understanding exactly where mental skills training fits in the process of personal development.

Too much of corporate training today consists mostly of re-naming, re-framing and re-packaging ideas and techniques that are outdated for the kind of business environment business leaders face today. While many of these techniques are essential to start learning how to be an effective person, they only provide short term change and benefits. They do not address the core of being at your best.

The foundation we speak of comes from within – the ability of an individual to adapt to the circumstances, think effectively under pressure and develop focused solutions while communicating effectively with others. This is accomplished first and foremost by focusing on individual leader development. Insight and personal growth will ultimately lend itself to increased success overall.

### Defining Moments

When a defining moment comes along, you either define the moment or the moment defines you. The biggest changes in life hinge on the smallest moments.

Perhaps you are facing a critical juncture in a negotiation or a merger, or a particularly challenging shareholder’s meeting, or a difficult performance review with an employee? In all these situations, there are moments that require your best. These moments will define the quality of your performance. To be at your best in these moments is less a function of whether or not you “know” what needs to be done, but much more a function of trusting your intuition, your instincts, your heart; being adaptive in your thinking. It involves being aware of what you know and understand, not only about the situation, but about yourself.

By developing people to think more effectively and to control mental, emotional and physiological responses, leaders can achieve resilience, self-confidence, mental agility, and poise and composure under fire. Our unique approach is to develop and measure these skills using advanced sensory feedback technology and a proven systematic process that was originally created nearly 24 years ago at West Point. By integrating the science and art of high performance into a systematic approach, the APEX model ultimately produces more positive and effective thinkers who can control their emotional and physiological response to any situation. This in turn yields enhanced performance through better self-control and self-regulation, sharper focus, flexibility, adaptability, improved decision making, and innovative problem solving.

## Being Exceptional Leaders

**You as an Exceptional Leader** Many say that the first principle of exceptional performance is **knowing** what to do. On the contrary, the first principle of exceptional performance is **knowing** who you are. You cannot perform exceptionally as a leader until you have learned to lead yourself, and leading yourself is all about self-mastery - mastery over what you think, say and do, the only things you can directly control. We have found that business people especially pride themselves in saying that they exercise control over a myriad of activities, events and people. That is not to say that they do not exercise influence, but influence and control are distinctively different. However, in truth, other than what we think, say and do, little else is in our direct control. Imagine spending all your time, energy and resources on making everything you think, say, and do as good as they can be. How great your performance could be; how much greater the influence; how much greater the effectiveness.

**Be, Know, Do** Individual development programs need a framework to guide the education, training and experiential activities supporting it. The framework developed at West Point and the US Army is simple, yet elegant. Traditional corporate learning models have focused primarily on

the **KNOW** and **DO**, i.e., education programs to increase knowledge (**KNOW**) and training programs to change behavior (**DO**). But few address the **BE**. Organizations seem to be reluctant to even address this part of development. Yet, exceptional performance is all about the **BE**. It is about the essence of how you think, feel, and respond.



Using a personal change framework, organizations can focus much more on developing the **BE**, which in our framework relates to personal development and self-mastery. The mental skills associated with exceptional performance are life skills. Once mastered, they become a part of who you are and how you function; at work, home, and in your personal life. As you develop greater insight and personal strength, you add that to the organization collective.

**Personal Development Is About Inner Control.** We have witnessed for some time now that some people and businesses succeed where others with relatively equal resources do not. The major differentiator is mental. The best results are obtained with total focus on the performance requirements at the moment! Successful people are exceptionally good at this! The key aspect of superior performance is inner control - control over mental, emotional and physiological states that are present in every pressure performance situation. That control is exercised through well-developed mental skills. Without mastery of these, business leaders cannot hope to repeat and sustain exceptional performance under pressure nor manage their own health and welfare.

## Exceptional Performance in a VUCA World

Most people learn to adapt and adjust to changing conditions to some degree in order to achieve effectiveness. But in these times of unparalleled global competition, where the playing field is much more level, the question has to be asked, "Is being effective good enough?" Normally, without competition it is. But competition changes everything. Being effective just won't carry the day for the long haul. Besides, psychologists continually remind us that the human spirit is such that people want to excel. *I never met a person who wants to be just ordinary!*

The challenge goes far beyond global competition. In the late 90s, the Army war College set to describing the kind of environment in which US soldiers were fighting and would continue to fight into the seeable future. They concluded that asymmetric warfare as a new kind of fighting brought about by insurgency and global terrorism has produced a very different kind of combat environment. They described this with the acronym **VUCA** which stands for **volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguity**. Since then, it has become quite apparent that this kind of an environment is no longer just the realm of combat but is in fact faced by virtually everyone in some form or another. Business leaders face this kind of environment each and every day as they struggle to compete in the global economy.

### VUCA

**Volatility.** Explosiveness of change. The rate and speed of change. Leaders need to learn to truly visualize and "see" potentialities and possibilities. Volatility impacts a unit by potentially creating fear and an aversion to taking needed risks. Volatility can lead to reverting back to basics. Volatility calls for vision.

**Uncertainty.** Unpredictability of change. The lack of clarity. An unawareness of issues and events. Uncertainty calls for understanding. Uncertainty can cause paralysis by analysis. Leaders need to be comfortable being uncomfortable.

**Complexity.** The intricacies of key decision factors. The multiplicity of forces and events and the chaos that can surround an organization. Complexity can cause a search for black and white solutions. Complexity calls for clarity.

**Ambiguity.** Vagueness about the current situation and potential outcomes. Lack of certainty about the meaning of an event. Ambiguity exists when a given event or situation can be interpreted in more than one way. It is the confusion over what is real and the potential for misreading events. Leaders need to develop flexibility, agility and decisiveness. They must exercise intuitive decision making. Ambiguity calls for agility and action.

So how do we operate in this environment? What do we expect from our leaders? Does this change the way we need to look at leader development? Do we place less emphasis on technical and professional competencies? It would be foolhardy to significantly alter emphasis on what has proven to be so successful in the past. These are the basic areas that must always be present in the development of business leaders. But they are based on repetitive training.

In preparation for the VUCA environment, we must decrease the number of repetitions in education and training and increase awareness with fewer repetitions. It is less about how many times you do something and more about how aware you are of what you are doing. It is more about how I am learning and less about what I am learning. The brain has an incredible capacity to learn if focus is razor sharp and concentration is intense. As far as the brain is concerned, learning is a delicate balance between repetitive, deliberate experience and attention.

In a VUCA environment, decisions are really dilemmas to be addressed, not problems to be solved. Such dilemmas require a different level of judgment and intuition because they are more difficult to resolve, more difficult to communicate, more difficult to reverse, take longer to implement and are filled with ethical implications. The resolution of decision dilemmas calls for intuitive and instinctive leadership. The traditional leader decision models emphasizing data, information and command centric decision making will not carry the day. The speed and complexity with which events unfold will require deep knowledge and broad understanding and wisdom by business leaders and by the workforce. We need to grow leaders who are flexible, highly adaptive, mentally agile and *comfortable being uncomfortable*. These are not task competencies or capabilities. They are underlying **mental capacities** that can be generalized across situations.

### Critical Leader Capacities

The challenge of leadership is to be exceptionally effective in extreme conditions. Nothing less is acceptable. In such an environment, leaders need to be at their best on a personal level, beyond technical and professional competency. They must have certain leader capacities that emanate from critical mental and emotional strength. They need to be able to directly respond to the challenges presented by rapidly evolving, ever changing and unclear situations; they need capacities that provide a sense of control. There are few leader capacities more important for successful leadership in a VUCA world than situational awareness, mental agility, learned instinct, and commander's calm.

**Situational Awareness.** Perceiving *salient elements* of a rapidly changing environment in order to *anticipate, understand* and *act* on future events.

**Mental Agility.** Applying a *creative solution* to a *complex problem* in a *timely manner*.

**Learned Instinct.** Taking action based on *intuition* and *learned behaviors* that become *automatic* in time through repetitive practice and repeat experiences.

**Commander's Calm.** Responding *mentally, emotionally and physiologically* in a cool, calm and composed manner.

In a VUCA world, the windows of opportunity open and close very quickly. Leaders need to prepare themselves ahead of time with **root mental skills** that provide them with the tools for recognizing, seizing and acting on those windows of opportunity. Certainly using the mind to envision a future is right at the top of these skills. The ability to create a clear image of the desired end-state and then articulate that vision to others is critical for alignment. The best way to communicate a vision to others is through storytelling. If the leader tells the right story at the right time in the right way, others will see the same "picture". Fewer words, less paper!

In addition, sensing a situation accurately calls for fine tuning our senses and then trusting them to provide the needed clarity for “simplifying” complex situations. The new corporate “battlefield” places the mental skills that develop awareness, adaptability, agility, resilience, and self-regulation at an absolute premium. Research and experience in sport and performance psychology have demonstrated that there is a set of mental skills key to exceptional performance in extreme conditions. The model below depicts the most frequently mentioned mental skills in the performance psychology literature. We have been using the five mental skills depicted below for over 24 years with clients as diverse as business leaders, military professionals, wounded warriors, and elite athletes,



# *Adaptive Thinking*





# Adaptive Thinking and Confidence

**It's not what happens to you that really matters; it's how you think about what happens to you!**

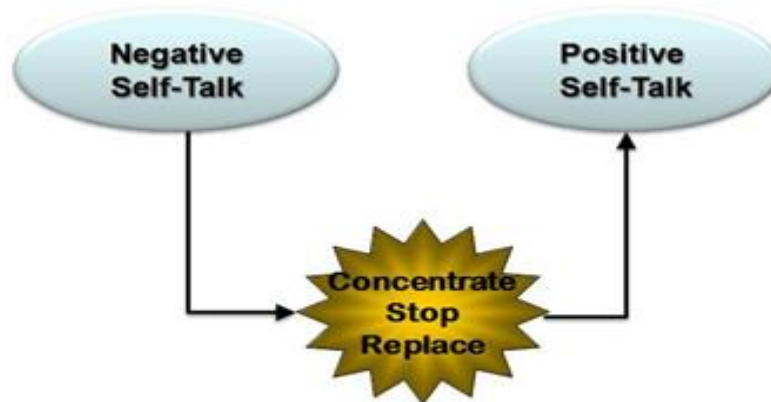
Adaptive thinking is the ability to control your thoughts and self-talk on command in order to maintain a positive and effective mind set for performance. It's about developing and maintaining **CONFIDENCE!**

Confidence is the ultimate determinant of success. We see and hear this all the time in sports, but when it comes to our own situations, we seem not to acknowledge it. Confidence comes from within. No one can give it to you. It reflects how we view ourselves and our preparation for future challenges. We limit ourselves by **what** and **how** we think!

## Building and Maintaining Confidence

- Keep talking to yourself - positively
- Executive presence – body language
- Stay in the company of positive people
- Give praise and recognition
- Get back in the game
- In critical situations, one action changes everything

**Self-Talk.** We become what we think about most. In psychology this is called the “self-fulfilling prophesy”. Without consciously knowing it, we do things that makes what we think come true. Because of this, it is important to learn to shift from negative to positive patterns of thinking and to control self-talk, all of which drive what we eventually think and believe. Recognizing that people need to take responsibility for their cognitions (thoughts), training that helps them achieve that control becomes essential. It is an effective tool for transforming negative thoughts to positive ones and moving from a pessimistic to an optimistic mind set. Mastery of this competence can transform a person into a highly adaptive and effective thinker.



## Adaptive Thinking Do's and Don'ts

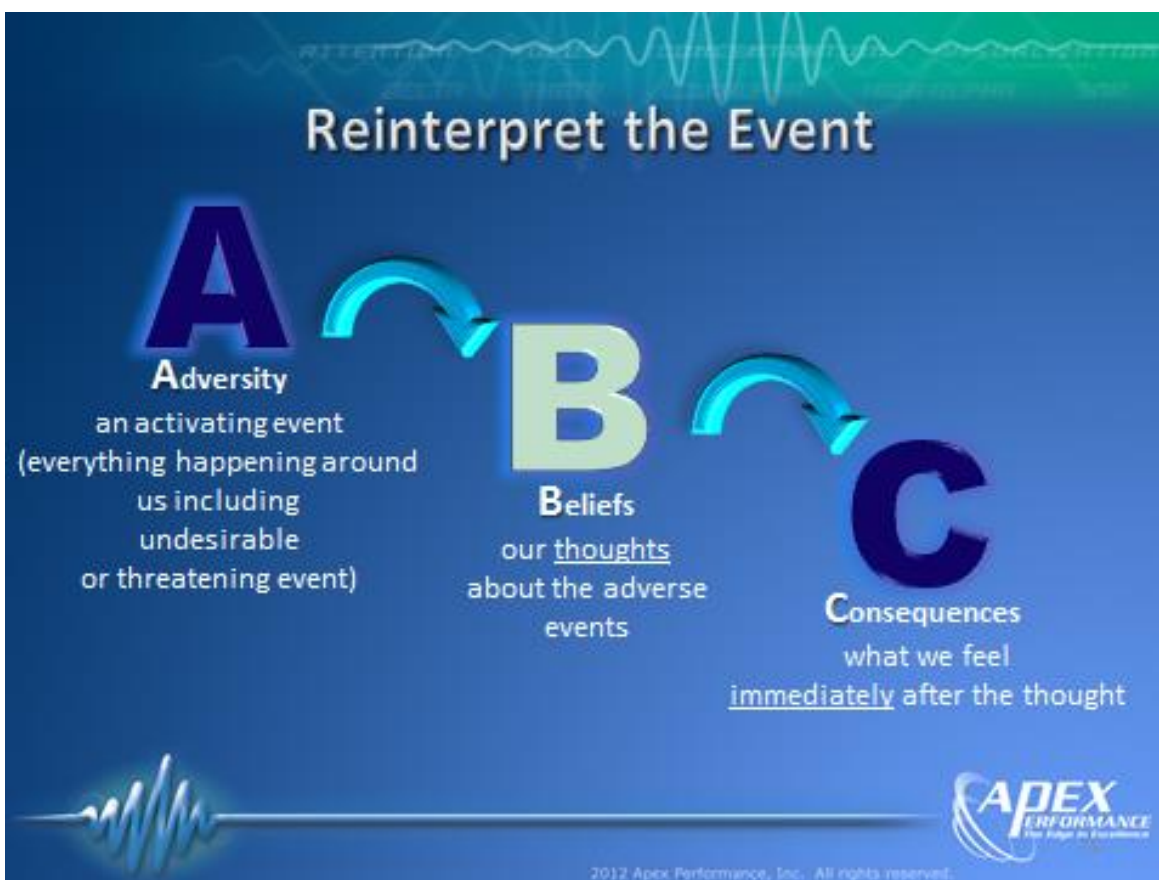
### POSITIVE THINKING

### NEGATIVE THINKING

<b>Before a Meeting and/or Presentation</b>	<b>Before a Meeting and/or Presentation</b>
Focus on positive self-perceptions and strengths	Don't focus on negative self-perceptions and weaknesses
Focus on your effective preparation	Don't focus on inadequacy of or problems with preparation
Remind yourself of previous successes	Avoid thinking about previous failures
Focus on positive expectations and goals	Avoid unrealistic expectations or negative goals
Reframe any irrational beliefs using effective counterarguments	Don't allow irrational beliefs to go unchallenged
<b>During a Meeting and/or Presentation</b>	<b>During a Meeting and/or Presentation</b>
Limit thinking and rely on automated skills	Don't think too much, overanalyze or try to "make it happen"
Focus on the present not the past or future	Don't dwell on past mistakes or potential future problems
Focus on process not product using effective cue words	Avoid thinking about the product too much
Appraise the situation as a challenge, and maintain positive expectations and goals	Don't appraise the situation as a threat and minimize negative expectations and goals
Reframe negative thoughts and use effective problem-solving strategies	Avoid haphazard reframing or unsystematic problem-solving
<b>Following a Meeting and/or Presentation</b>	<b>Following a Meeting and/or Presentation</b>
Attribute success to effort and ability which is in your control; View failure as situational or unstable and changeable	Don't attribute success to uncontrollable factors such as opponent's ability or luck; Don't view failure as stable and unchangeable
Develop positive future expectations and goals, complete with action plans for how to achieve them	Avoid negative expectations and goals, and minimize planning problem oversights

## Strategies for Becoming More Optimistic and Adaptive

- Play to your strengths
- Seek the company of positive individuals
- Surround yourself with inspirational material
- When faced with setbacks, focus on what you can change, ignore what you can't
- Make your self-talk work for you
- Reinterpret the event: ABC



# Stress Management



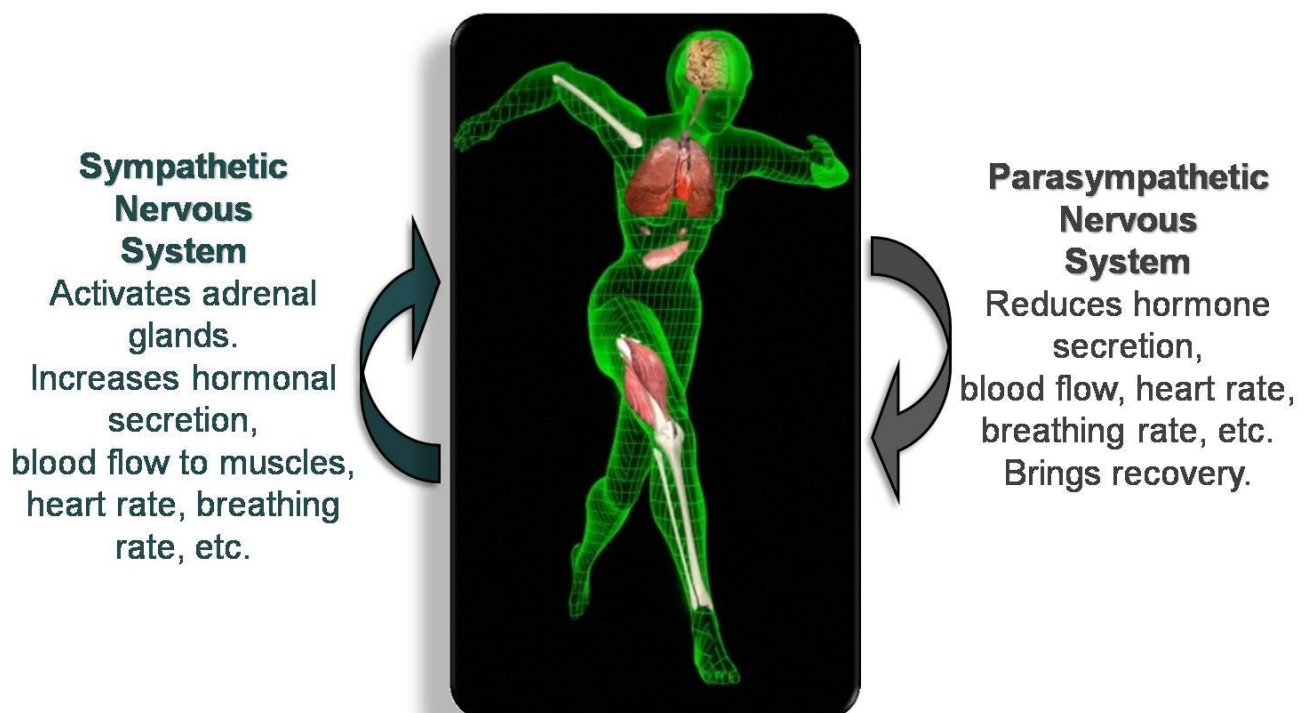
## Stress Management: Thriving Under Pressure

Anyone can perform well when everything is going just right. But what about when conditions are unfavorable, when things are going against you, when the pressure is on, when things are not going according to plan? Who really delivers then? There are performers who actually thrive under these conditions. You need to be one of them. They welcome the pressure. It drives them. It gives them energy and desire, coupled with the ultimate satisfaction of having overcome all odds while doing something exceptional. The debilitating effects of stress on individuals and their performance have been well documented in recent years.

One of the major stressors is relentless pressure to deliver results through higher and higher levels of performance and ever increasing productivity. Many organizations offer stress management seminars in hopes of raising awareness about the effects of stress and providing simple coping mechanisms. However, research has shown that the ability to handle oneself in high pressure and demanding situations is less about the stressors and more about the individual's response to them.

### Fight or Flight?

**Anxiety, Nervousness, Butterflies..... EXPECT THEM, WANT THEM.** When we perceive a significant threat to us, our bodies get ready for either a fight to the death or a desperate flight from certain defeat by a clearly superior adversary. It is an automatic mechanism called *the flight-or-flight response* that dates back to our pre-historic ancestors who constantly faced the dangers of wild animals and needed built-in mechanisms that would allow for survival. The problem today is that same mechanism kicks in when we perceive a threat that is not actual physical harm.



## Fight or Flight: What are our bodies doing?

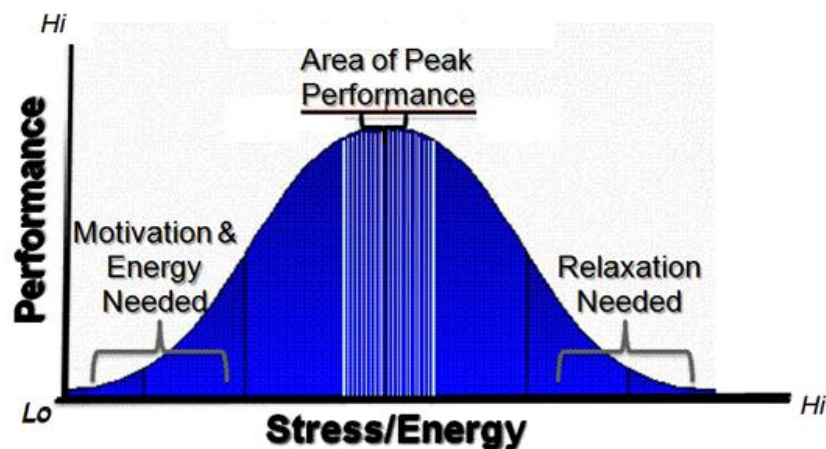
Physiological	Mental	Behavioral
Increased HR, BP Increased sweating Rapid respiration Blood flow to skin Increased muscle tension Increased oxygen intake Increased blood sugar levels Cotton mouth Frequent urinating Increased adrenalin	Worry Feeling overwhelmed Unable to decide Feeling confused Loss of concentration Unable to direct attention Feeling not in control Narrowing of attention	Rapid talking Nail biting Foot tapping Muscle twitch Pacing Scowling Increased blinking Yawning Trembling Broken voice

**The Solution** lies in a more systematic and integrated approach to providing the necessary tools for actually thriving under pressure, not just surviving. Exceptional performances are not about being relaxed. They are about being energized and excited, but always very much in control, remaining calm and focused. Understanding how stress works from a psychophysiological perspective and having means at your disposal for altering its effects are powerful tools for learning how to thrive in pressure situations and for living your life.

## The Relationship Between Stress and Performance

### Know Where You Are and What To Do:

The relationship between stress and arousal and performance is a curvilinear one (see figure below). When you find yourself on the left side, you need some arousal to get going, some energy to move up this curve to that optimal peak performance level where you are at your best. On the other hand, when you are over-aroused because of stress (the right side of the curve), you need to be able to calm yourself and regain composure so you can get back to the center and perform at your best. That is where relaxation training comes in.



## Tips for Reducing Stress

By making small adjustments to our normal routines, we can greatly reduce the level of stress we experience and boost our overall health and well-being. Establishing a consistent bedtime routine and getting enough sleep can greatly improve performance. Research has shown that the effect of sleep deprivation negatively impacts our bodies and our cognitive function, causing loss of attention and diminished logic of thinking to name a few. In addition to the scheduled vacations and breaks from work, it is important that we incorporate and plan more frequent forms of recreations for ourselves to help rejuvenate and reenergize (reading, walking, getting out of the house, etc.).

Our eating habits can also impact stress levels. Large meals increase metabolic activity which triggers many of the physiological responses similar to stress including: increases in heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, etc. Getting enough sleep, having proper “rest periods” like taking personal time out, proper eating habits, and having genuine fun, are major ways to achieve some recovery from stress. Again, these must be built into regular routines or they will not happen.

Finally, learning various relaxation techniques is one of the most powerful “tools” you can use to lower stress. Relaxation exercises put our neurological system into a condition that allows for the triggering of the relaxation response, helping “jump-start” the parasympathetic nervous system.

### Sleep



- 8-8.4 hrs: fully restorative
- 5-8 hrs: average person needs to maintain health
- Stay on a sleep routine

### Eat



- Choose healthy foods
- Balanced diets
- H<sub>2</sub>O
- 4-6 small meals
- Plan ahead

### Exercise



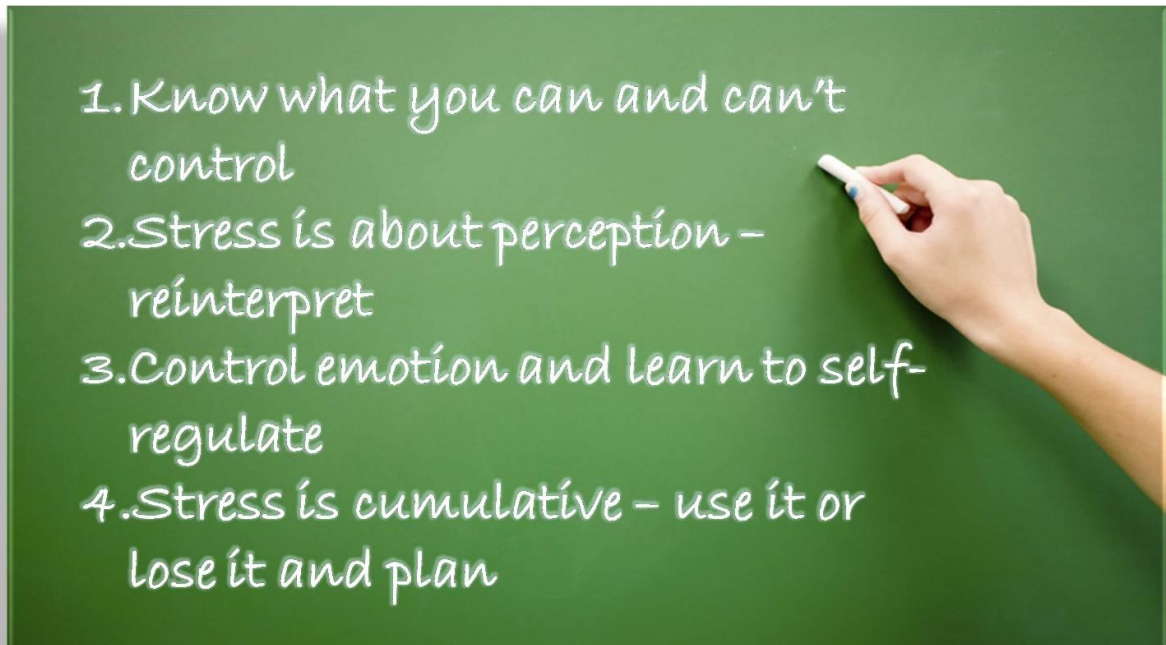
- 30 min most days of the week reduces risk of chronic disease
- 60 min of moderate to vigorous – maintain weight
- Cardio, stretching, & resistance

### Time-Out



- Listen to music
- Talk with other people
- Get outside; breathe some fresh air
- Do fun things (hobby, sport, etc.)
- Get away from work at home

## Rules of Stress Management



## Triggering the Relaxation Response

### **Step 1: A Quiet Environment**

Choose a place that is quiet with little or no distractions. (affords the opportunity to focus attention internally)

### **Step 2: A Comfortable Position**

Body needs to be very relaxed, no tense muscles. Sitting or lying down in a comfortable body position is essential.

### **Step 3: A Passive Mind**

Distracting thoughts are disregarded and attention redirected to the focus of attention. Do not reflect on how well you are doing with the relaxation. Adopt a "let it happen" mindset. A passive attitude is the most important element of the Relaxation Response. Distracting thoughts will occur but they must be "let go."

### **Step 4: A Mental Device**

The mind needs to be shifted from externally oriented thoughts to an internal focus – a word, phrase, image, or sound coupled with a physiological orientation (breathing, heart, etc.)



# Attention Control



## Concentration Amidst Distractions

The demand for our attention in modern society is unparalleled in both scope and intensity. Yet the way in which we attend has not significantly changed over time. We still primarily learn to attend to the right things at the right time through trial-and-error and, if fortunate, through good coaching by parents, teachers, coaches, etc. Through this method, we learn what is useful for our attention and what is not as we encounter new situations. However, given today's stimulus rich environment, all competing for our attention, this is not the most efficient and effective way to learn to attend. The resultant attention deficit threatens to seriously cripple the workplace.

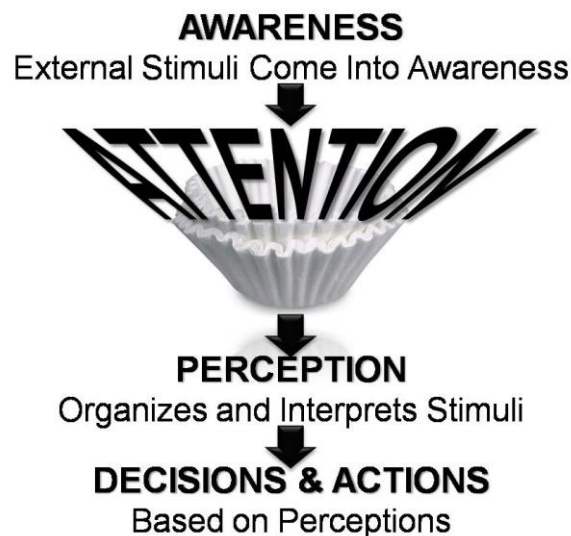
**Attention Control** refers to the ability to direct one's attention totally at the task at hand. It involves both the ability to **focus** and **concentrate** on what is relevant to the task at hand regardless of distractions. When you learn to control your attention, you will be able to shift your attention "on command" as the demands of the environment change.

**Focus** represents the direction and clarity of our attention (i.e. looking through the lens of camera and preparing to take a picture)

**Concentration** refers to the duration and intensity in which we attend to objects or stimuli

## Attention Process

The diagram below depicts the sequence of events in the attention process. Decisions and actions can improve by intervening earlier in the process.



# The Myth of Multitasking

Our brains are not wired to multi-attend

Brain attends to one thing in one sensory mode at any one time

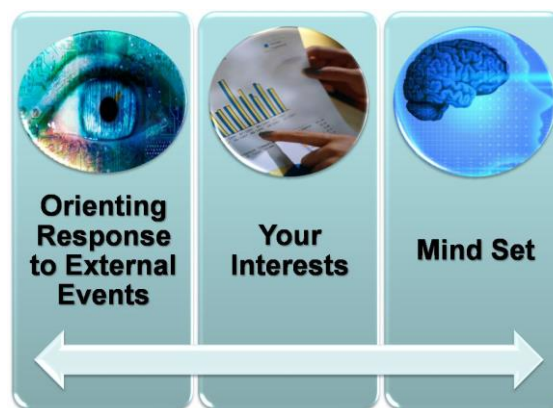
Real attention requires complete immersion in the task

For the best attention, the brain needs a clear target

The problem today is that we are made to feel that we must multitask in order to keep our heads above water

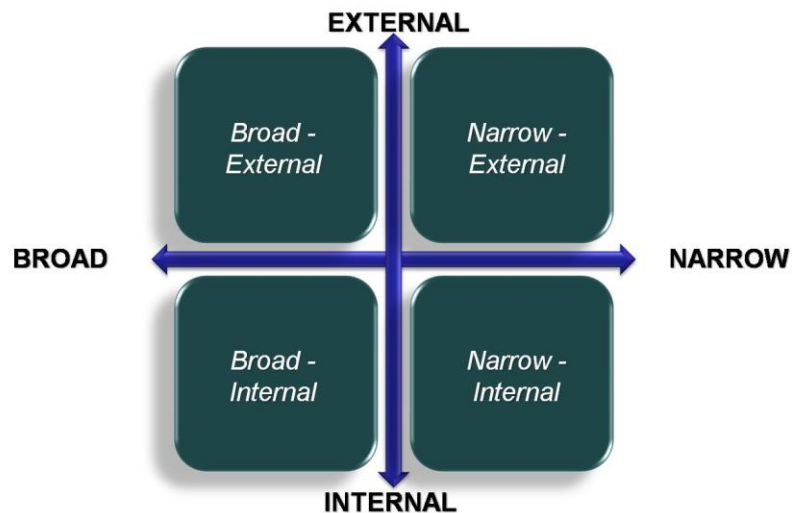
## Automatic Attention Grabbers

As a survival mechanism, our attention is automatically directed by sudden change in the stimuli, your interests (attention follows interest), and a pre-disposed mind set for a situation.



## An Attention Model

The graphic below is a simple but powerful way to view attention. It provides a template which you can lay over any situation and quickly determine what quadrant your attention is in, where should it be, and when and where do you shift.



**Internal:** Focus on something internal that you can control

**External:** Focus on the environment or situation that's more controllable

**Broad:** Taking in a wide array of stimuli

**Narrow:** Attend to very few stimuli

(Adapted from R. Nideffer & R. Sharpe, Attention Control Training, Wideview Books, 1979)

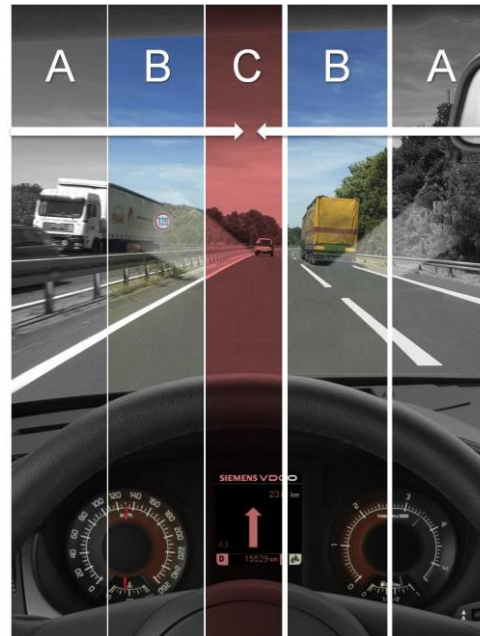


<p><b>Broad-External</b> <i>Assess</i></p> <p>Good for quickly assessing the situation. Essential for being aware of the cues in the environment. Mistakes are due to paying attention to irrelevant and distracting cues.</p>	<p><b>Narrow-External</b> <i>Act</i></p> <p>Good for locking on one or two primary action targets. Essential for keeping out distractions. Mistakes are due to blinking. Becoming too narrow in concentration.</p>
<p><b>Broad-Internal</b> <i>Analyze</i></p> <p>Good for dealing with a lot of things at the same time. Essential for developing a game strategy or plan. Mistakes are due to over-analysis, thinking too much about the wrong things.</p>	<p><b>Narrow-Internal</b> <i>Prepare</i></p> <p>Good for locking in on a single thought, idea, or feeling. Essential for body awareness, arousal regulation, and mental imagery. Mistakes are due to choking. Being distracted by the internal states.</p>

Although the demand for your attention continues to change and become more intense, you have available more innovative and scientific approaches to addressing the challenge. Attention control training combines a simple but robust framework for understanding how attention works, a means for navigating that framework, and new brain wave (EEG) technology that provides accurate feedback about **how** you are paying attention – the key to improving focus and concentration directly.

## Arousal and Attention

Similar to the Stress-Arousal relationship, there is also a relationship between arousal and attention. If we think of our field of attention like being in the driver's seat of a car like the figure below, we see that a broad view encompasses a wide range of information, much of which is irrelevant (depicted in the areas lettered "A"). As we become more aroused, stressed, or excited, our field begins to narrow (depicted in the areas lettered "B") and we leave out irrelevant information and focus on task-relevant stimuli or the information that is critical to the task or situation at hand. This is the area of **optimal focus** represented by areas B. Area "C" represents too narrow of a focus. As we become too excited, anxious, or aroused/stressed we experience a narrowing of our attention, which now causes us to miss a lot of task relevant information (solely seeing the "C" area). In the figure on the side, that could mean missing cars along side us, signs to direct us, or potential turning or passing cues. Even worse, too narrow a view could lead to a wreck! This is one of the key reasons for learning relaxation and stress management techniques. By returning to a calm and composed state we are able to return to the optimal field of focus.



### Improving attention by understanding the relationship between task difficulty (Y-axis) and ability (X-axis)

<b>Hi</b>	Anxious Attention Too Intense	Full Concentration Flow – The Zone Fully Engaged High Performance
<b>Lo</b>	Lack of Attention Unworthy Performance	Attention Wanders Sporadic Engagement Boredom
	<b>Lo</b>	<b>Hi</b>

# Tips for Improving Attention

## Keys to Attention Control:

- Knowing where to focus and for how long
- Knowing when and how to shift our attention
- Recognizing that there really is no such thing as “blocking out” distractions



### Find “one point” on which you can center your attention

- What’s important today? Right now?
- Use cue words to help you
- A personal routine narrows your focus down to “one point”

### Learn to shift the intensity of your attention throughout the day

- “Flashlight Beam”

### Identify typical distractions in your environment

#### Use imagery

- Study everything about a performance situation, then use imagery to anticipate what to attend to & what possible distractions might arise

# Imagery

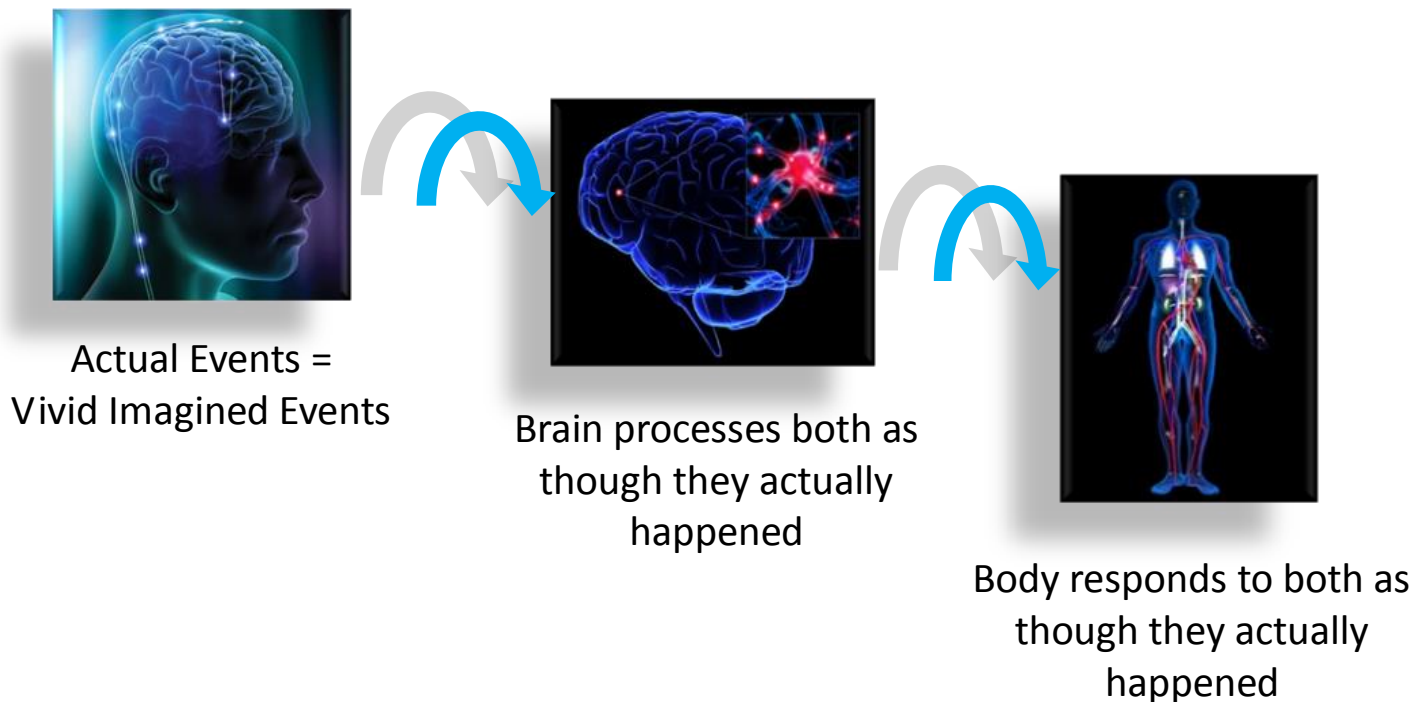


## What You See Is What You Get!

Achieving a really challenging goal is to see it already accomplished. Imagery, commonly referred to as visualization, is a powerful tool for doing exactly that. It involves using all the senses to create or recreate an experience in the mind. Everyone has an inherent capability, but, how well it is developed is a function of your developmental experiences. We all use imagery in one form or another all the time. We differ, however, in its sophistication and effectiveness. Some image very effectively with no formal training while most do so only after systematic training and practice of the skill. The neurological wiring, however, is in everyone. The early and consistent use of the imagination in play and work helps build the brain "muscles" for imaging. Imagery maximizes potential for performance by helping to develop greater confidence, energy, concentration, and feelings of success.

We have discovered through biofeedback and neurofeedback instrumentation that high quality imagery is characterized by a deep physiological and mental coherence coupled with an optimal level of alertness and concentration. The power of imagery comes from the confidence gained by seeing and feeling successful performance in the mind before it actually happens. The common description of this experience is "I have been here before.". You can recreate or create experiences in the mind using all five senses.

### Why does imagery work?





## When and where to incorporate imagery

Once you become comfortable using imagery, you can do it anywhere. In your office, take a few seconds prior to a meeting, important phone call, or presentation to image various scenarios and how you will respond to each; going through different points that you plan to make. See yourself discuss these points successfully and confidently each time. This will increase your self-confidence and the likelihood of a positive performance.

### Benefits of Using Imagery

- Developing self-confidence/efficacy by seeing yourself master a skill or accomplishing a goal
- Developing pre-meeting or event strategies which teach you to cope with a variety of scenarios before you actually encounter them
- Increase habituation of leadership behaviors so that they become your dominant response

## Situations for Using Imagery



**Improving a Skill**



**Enhancing Performance**



**Healing and Recovery**



**Generating Breakthrough Ideas**



**Creating a Vision**



**Briefings & Conducting Meetings**



**Communicate with Employees**



**Sales Calls**

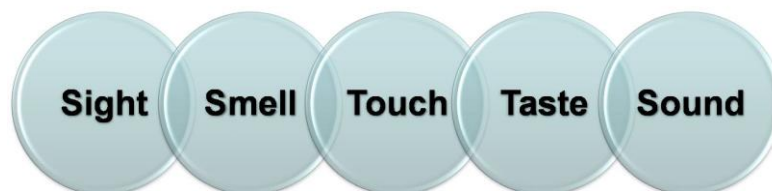


**Performance Appraisal Sessions**

## Tips for Creating Your Own Imagery Script

1. See, hear, and feel yourself performing the desired task/event/situation.
2. Write down every detail you can see, hear, smell or feel.
3. Begin with arriving at the event, going through your normal preparatory routine, and the few minutes before you perform.
4. Go into vivid detail about the event and your experience of it, including sounds, colors, smells, the audience, the place, the positive feelings in your body, and your mental and emotional state.
5. Picture yourself being totally relaxed, confident, powerful, and in complete control of your mind and body. Include your affirmations and key words that will help you during your real performance.
6. Go through your whole event picturing each significant point. Feel yourself going smoothly and performing with strength and confidence.
7. After writing your visualization, write statements of relaxation, confidence, power, and mental preparedness.
8. Now write your visualization in script form. Read through it and then visualize, or have someone read it as you visualize.
9. Better yet, you can record it onto a CD or MP3 and listen to it as you visualize.
10. Visualize with the finished script at least once a day and, if possible, just before the performance situation. The more you do it, the more “real” it becomes.

### Incorporate All 5 Senses





## **Mental Skills Training Applications: What I Can Do Immediately After This Workshop**

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- Realize the degree of self-control I really have and exercise it in everything I do.
- In long meetings or intensive study conditions, take micro-breaks.
- In meetings and presentations, focus in sharply on the person speaking.
- When reading, capture “chunks” (i.e. broaden the attention target).
- When in a narrow attention situation, pay attention to your level of alertness.
- Focus on quickly finding the “one point” for different tasks.
- Do the deeper, rhythmic breathing all the time. Make it natural and automatic.
- Use imagery as a cue/trigger for evoking the relaxation response.
- Practice imagery every day. Shorter but high quality.
- Communicate positively to the family. Say it in the affirmative.
- Focus on your goal(s) each and every day.
- Read up on peak performance & mental skills materials regularly.
- Schedule the mental skills practice in your calendar.
- Follow the Mental Skills Workout Plan.

# *Mental Skills Self-Managed Development*



## Adaptive Thinking

### Self-Managed Development

- Continue to identify adverse situations that are troublesome and conduct the **ABC Analysis** and then intervene with the disputation technique you learned earlier in this module. Practice changing your thinking in order to **control emotional reactions** that can lead to undesirable behavior. Continue to learn to focus on what you can directly control, not on what you can't.
- Practice **Thought Stopping** by saying to yourself "**STOP**" whenever you catch yourself with negative self-talk immediately after an event and then **REPLACING** it with appropriate positive self-talk.

## Stress-Energy Management

### Self-Managed Development

- This is a skill you can always improve upon. Much higher levels of control for the various stress response functions (heart rate, respiration, skin conductance, temperature) can be reached through continuous practice. There is a saying in the peak performance business.... Controlling the *effects* of stress allows one to influence the *cause* of the effects.
- A key objective of relaxation and stress management training is to **control emotion and the physiological responses** that result from it – to learn to temper anger and hostility.
- Regular practice with the relaxation exercises that are on your **Relaxation CD** will continue to hone your control of stress responses and enable you to trigger more calm and composed physiological, emotional and mental states.
- The two most important physiological functions that serve as triggers to the relaxation response are **Heart Rate** and **Deep Breathing**. Continuing to develop your ability to change your heart rate at will (up and down) will significantly improve your ability to attain a calmer more composed physiological and mental state. As you improve your ability to **voluntarily control** these two critical physiological functions, you will be able to lower and raise your overall arousal levels at will to meet the situation.
- Remember to engage in the **Recovery** activities each and every day. You need to do this especially when you have an extended stressful period or the demands are prolonged. These are the things that we abandon first when under pressure and stress, hampering our potential performance even more.

## Attention Control

### Self-Managed Development

- Continuing to find different ways to attend to the key stimuli, the “one point”, in all the various activities in which you are engaged will continue to improve your attention skills. For auditory attention, continue to use some of the techniques:
  - Listen to stimuli like music and audio books and then narrow and broaden your attention on command, i.e., you control it. Remember to always **Pay Attention to How You Pay Attention** when practicing attention control. This will improve the way you pay attention.
  - During a conversation, listen intently and try the “**echo**” technique wherein you repeat in your mind (like an echo) what the person has just said. You will find yourself attending better and as a result improve in comprehending and retaining what the person said.
- For visual attention, work with video in the same way as you do with music and sound to enhance your attention skills. Watch a TV program or a video, then isolate a specific part and focus on it as long as you can as the scenes change. A variation to this is to take a laser pointer and point it randomly at the screen as you are watching a video. The objective is to stay focused and concentrating on the red point, not on the picture. *(Even more effective if you have someone else work the laser pointer)* Continue to change what you make “**figure and ground**” as you become more and more aware and sensitive to altering the way you pay attention. Remember, this is one of the primary objectives of attention control training – to alter how you pay attention in different attention scenarios as defined by **Niderfer’s Four-Quadrant Attention Model**.
- You also need to develop your attention skills in your actual work performance situations. Here you can practice as you participate in briefings and presentations and in meetings.
- As you watch and listen to presentations, be aware of how you are paying attention. Practice **cycling** between watching (visual attention) and listening (auditory attention). Remember, to maximize your attention, put your focus and concentration on **one sense** at a time. Learn to **shift your attention** in the most efficient and effective way. Use the four quadrants of the Attention Model to guide you in determining where your attention should be at any one moment.
- In meetings, you should be **deliberately and systematically cycling** back-and-forth between a very narrow and tight attention to any one individual and a broader attention to the overall conversation and dynamics in general. You will begin to see improvement in retention and learning as a result of the presentations and meetings. Continuous practice is a must before you master this ability.

## Imagery

### Self-Managed Development

- This is the skill that integrates all the others. Imagery and visualization should be at the heart of your peak performance preparation. Depending upon the results of the assessment of your general **Visualization and Imagery Skills**, ongoing development can be a combination of continued development of your imagery skills and applying them to more and more performance situations.
- Script out various desired performance situations (use the **10 Steps to Writing and Doing Your Own Visualization Script**) and then conduct very **systematic and controlled visualization** sessions.

The visualization of desired future behavior and performance is really the final step in the peak performance development process. It is here that you will need to integrate all the previous skills in order to achieve a high level of “mental rehearsal” of desired performance, an “***I have been here before***” feeling that you will experience when you are in the actual performance situation.

- Developing Your Visualization Skills:
  - “**See**” simple things at first: a color, a shape, a still picture, etc., then build to more complex performance scenarios.
  - Use a video of your choice (high personal interest) and follow this procedure:
    1. Play about 5 seconds of the video; pause, close your eyes; visualize the exact same picture in your mind’s eye. Repeat until you can reproduce the moving images of the video. Then move to a different scene. Keep the scenes short.
    2. With each imagery practice, evaluate yourself using the form provided (**Imagery Assessment**). You may want to make extra copies of the form so that you can assess yourself as often as you want.

# Exercises





## PEAK PERFORMANCE SKILLS LEVEL SELF-ASSESSMENT

Assess your level of mastery of the five peak performance skills described below by selecting the response that best describes your current level of proficiency. Rate each item on a scale from 1-7.

**Never**      **Sometimes**      **Always**  
1    2    3    4    5

### Goal-Setting

Score \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 2 3 4 5      I have a clear vision and mission
- 1 2 3 4 5      I systematically write down my goals and objectives
- 1 2 3 4 5      I act on my goals and objectives
- 1 2 3 4 5      My goals and objectives are present in my mind
- 1 2 3 4 5      I reassess my goals

### Adaptive Thinking

Score \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 2 3 4 5      I am aware of what I say to myself
- 1 2 3 4 5      I can stop negative thoughts on command & replace them with positive thoughts
- 1 2 3 4 5      I know what to say to myself to build and maintain confidence
- 1 2 3 4 5      I **know** how I need to think & what to say to myself to influence my performance
- 1 2 3 4 5      I **use** what I think and say to myself to influence my behavior and performance

### Stress Management

Score \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 2 3 4 5      I regularly listen to my body to know whether I am too wired or flat
- 1 2 3 4 5      I know how to make my mind and body feel to perform optimally
- 1 2 3 4 5      I do relaxation exercises that calm me down within seconds
- 1 2 3 4 5      I **know** the key recovery activities that allow me to recover from stressful days
- 1 2 3 4 5      I **use** the key recovery activities that allow me to recover from stressful days

### Attention Control

Score \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 2 3 4 5      I am able to concentrate on a task for the needed duration
- 1 2 3 4 5      If interrupted during a task, I can get myself back on track
- 1 2 3 4 5      I know how to pay attention to listen effectively
- 1 2 3 4 5      I can shift my attention from the big picture to the details and back or vice versa
- 1 2 3 4 5      I know exactly **where** to pay attention in a given task

### Visualization and Imagery

Score \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 2 3 4 5      I can literally see pictures in my mind
- 1 2 3 4 5      I can control the images I create in my mind
- 1 2 3 4 5      The pictures I create in my mind are clear and vivid
- 1 2 3 4 5      I use pictures in my mind to rehearse future business scenarios
- 1 2 3 4 5      I create a clear picture of the desired outcome so that others can "see" it too

## Exercise: What Is Confidence?

Take a moment and identify someone you know who embodies confidence (i.e. coworker, friend, relative).

**What are the things you observe about this person that suggests confidence?**

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**What are some common characteristics from the examples given?**

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## Exercise: Building Confidence

Take a moment and identify your abilities and attributes.

**Something I do well....**

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**My greatest strength is....**

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**I have the power to....**

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---

**I have accomplished....**

---

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**Something I can do now I couldn't do before is....**

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**My greatest achievement is....**

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## Exercise: Are you using self-talk to your advantage?

Answer the following with: 0 = Never 1 = Sometimes 2 = Almost Always

1. Before a big test/speech/interview... I purposely tell myself what to do and how to focus
2. I am able to focus on what I'm doing instead of the outcome
3. In a performance situation, I'm my biggest supporter
4. I know what to say to myself to get over a mistake
5. I have specific things I say to myself to stay focused
6. I have specific things I say to myself to stay motivated
7. I know how to talk to myself to be at my best
8. I focus on my strengths, not weaknesses before/during performances

**Score 11-16:** You're doing a great job managing your self-talk but keep at it. Use these new concepts and techniques to take it to the next level.

**Score 6-10:** You're headed in the right direction but practice these skills on a consistent basis. It's just like anything you learn, the more you practice, the more likely you are to stick to it.

**Score 0-5:** You're not taking control over your self-talk. It may be ok when things are going well but it probably hurts you when you need it most. Work at it and take back control

### Exercise: Be Prepared!

Identify things you can say to yourself in these moments to help keep you focused and confident.

1 Hour Before a Critical Meeting	

5 Minutes Before the Meeting	

Critical Moment During (when you may tend to talk negatively)	

Immediately After the Meeting	

## Holmes-Rahe Social Readjustment Rating Scale

Indicate which of the following events has happened to you within the last 12 months by circling the value associated with that event. If the event has occurred more than once, add the value indicated the number of times the event has occurred. (For example, if you have had a change in residence twice, which has a value of 20, you would double it and then give yourself a score of 40 for that item).

Death of spouse	100
Divorce	73
Marital separation	65
Jail term	63
Death of close family member	63
Personal injury or illness	53
Marriage	50
Fired at work	47
Marital reconciliation	45
Retirement	45
Change in health of family member	44
Pregnancy	40
Sex difficulties	39
Gain of new family member	39
Business adjustment	39
Change in financial state	38
Death of a close friend	37
Change to different line of work	36
Change in number of arguments with spouse	35
Mortgage over \$300,000	31
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30
Change in responsibilities at work	29
Son or daughter leaving home	29
Trouble with in-laws	29
Outstanding personal achievement	28
Spouse begins or stops work	26
Begin or end school	26
Change in living conditions	25
Revision of personal habits	24
Trouble with boss	23
Change in work hours or conditions	20
Change in residence	20
Change in schools	20
Change in recreation	19
Change in church activities	19
Change in social activities	18
Mortgage or loan less than \$300,000	17
Change in sleeping habits	16
Change in number family get-togethers	15
Change in eating habits	15
Vacation	13
Christmas	12
Minor violations of the law	11

### Exercise: Stressors

What are your stressors and their effects?

#### *Physical*

Stressors	Effects

#### *Mental*

Stressors	Effects

#### *Emotional*

Stressors	Effects

## Evaluating Your Concentration Concentration Grid

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Beginning with number 00, put a slash through as many consecutive numbers (00, 01, 02, 03...) as possible in 60 seconds.

84	27	51	78	59	52	13	85	61	55
28	60	92	04	97	90	31	57	29	33
32	96	65	39	80	77	49	86	18	70
76	87	71	95	98	81	01	46	88	00
48	82	89	47	35	17	10	42	62	34
44	67	93	11	07	43	72	94	69	56
53	79	05	22	54	74	58	14	91	02
06	68	99	75	26	15	41	66	20	40
50	09	64	08	38	30	36	45	83	24
03	73	21	23	16	37	25	19	12	63

**(Attention Style Questionnaire)**

(R.M. Nideffer & R.C. Sharpe, *ACT: Attention Control Training*, 1978)

For each item, circle the word that best fits your own abilities. The lines are to be used later for scoring.

**External = \_\_\_\_\_**

- |  |              |       |
|--|--------------|-------|
| 1. I am good at quickly analyzing a complex situation such as how a play is developing in football, or which of four or five children started a fight. | Never        | _____ |
|  | Rarely       | _____ |
|  | Sometimes    | _____ |
|  | Frequently   | _____ |
|  | All the time | _____ |
| 2. In a room filled with children, or on a playing field, I know what everyone is doing.   | Never        | _____ |
|  | Rarely       | _____ |
|  | Sometimes    | _____ |
|  | Frequently   | _____ |
|  | All the time | _____ |

**Analytical = \_\_\_\_\_**

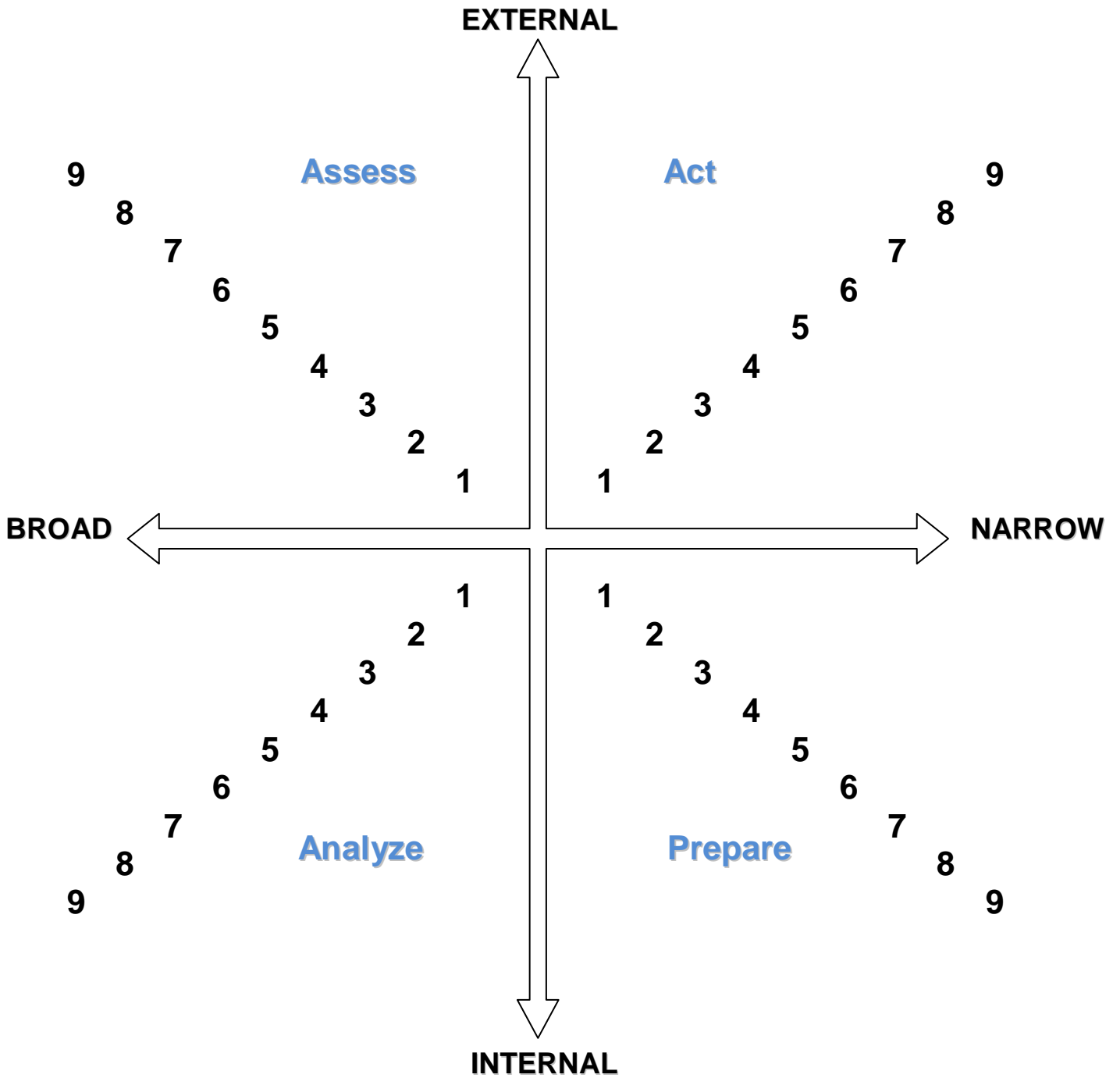
- |   |              |       |
|---|--------------|-------|
| 1. All I need is a little information and I can come up with a large number of ideas. | Never        | _____ |
|   | Rarely       | _____ |
|   | Sometimes    | _____ |
|   | Frequently   | _____ |
|   | All the time | _____ |
| 2. It is easy for me to bring together ideas from a number of different areas.        | Never        | _____ |
|   | Rarely       | _____ |
|   | Sometimes    | _____ |
|   | Frequently   | _____ |
|   | All the time | _____ |

**Narrow = \_\_\_\_\_**

- |  |              |       |
|--|--------------|-------|
| 1. It is easy for me to keep thoughts from interfering with something I am watching or listening to. | Never        | _____ |
|  | Rarely       | _____ |
|  | Sometimes    | _____ |
|  | Frequently   | _____ |
|  | All the time | _____ |
| 2. It is easy for me to keep sights and sounds from interfering with my thoughts.                    | Never        | _____ |
|  | Rarely       | _____ |
|  | Sometimes    | _____ |
|  | Frequently   | _____ |
|  | All the time | _____ |

# Attention Style

Never = 0    Rarely = 1    Sometimes = 2    Frequently = 3    All the time = 4





## Evaluating Your Concentration Concentration Grid

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Beginning with number 00, put a slash through as many consecutive numbers (00, 01, 02, 03...) as possible in 60 seconds.

84	27	51	78	59	52	13	85	61	55
28	60	92	04	97	90	31	57	29	33
32	96	65	39	80	77	49	86	18	70
76	87	71	95	98	81	01	46	88	00
48	82	89	47	35	17	10	42	62	34
44	67	93	11	07	43	72	94	69	56
53	79	05	22	54	74	58	14	91	02
06	68	99	75	26	15	41	66	20	40
50	09	64	08	38	30	36	45	83	24
03	73	21	23	16	37	25	19	12	63

# Evaluating your Imagery Skills

## **Situation 1**

	Very Poorly	2	3	4	Very Well
a. How well did you see yourself performing the activity?	1	2	3	4	5
b. How well did you hear the sounds of performing the activity?	1	2	3	4	5
c. How well were you able to feel yourself performing the activity?	1	2	3	4	5
d. How well were you aware of your mood?	1	2	3	4	5
e. How well were you able to control your image?	1	2	3	4	5

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Situation 2: Bedroom**

<u>Rate your vividness:</u>	Low				High
Overall vividness	1	2	3	4	5
Sight vividness	1	2	3	4	5
Touch vividness	1	2	3	4	5
Sound vividness	1	2	3	4	5
Emotional vividness	1	2	3	4	5
Smell vividness	1	2	3	4	5

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Situation 3: Wooden Cube**

	Low				High
Start and stop images on command	1	2	3	4	5
Make images do what you want them to	1	2	3	4	5

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 4: Arm Heaviness**

	Low				High
Start and stop images on command	1	2	3	4	5
Make images do what you want them to	1	2	3	4	5

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

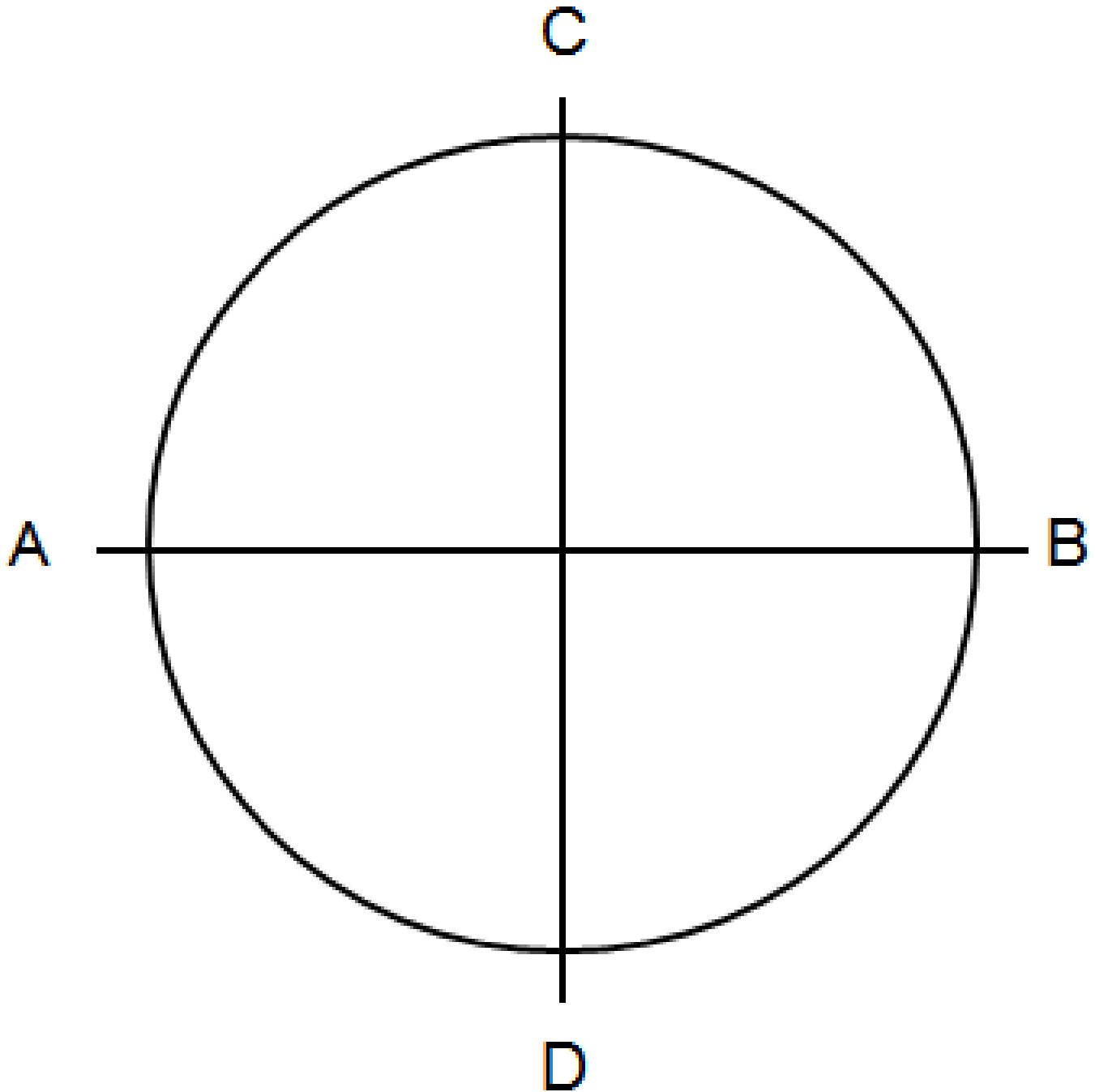
**Situation 5: Ice Water**

Rate your ability to:	Low				High
Start and stop images on command	1	2	3	4	5
Make images do what you want them to	1	2	3	4	5

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

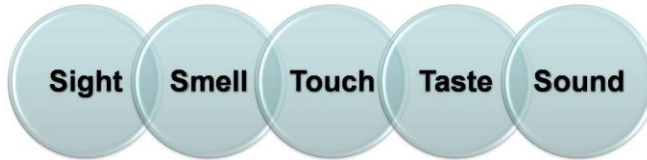
\_\_\_\_\_

## The Power of Imagery



## Exercise: Imagery Script

Using the “10 steps to writing an imagery script,” select an upcoming performance (i.e. interview, presentation) and develop your own script. Use different elements of the event as steps and work your way from start to finish. Remember; incorporate all 5 senses into the script to make it as real as possible.



Lined area for writing the script, consisting of 22 horizontal lines.

## Workshop Lessons

Please list 3 things in each area you have learned and can take away as a starting point for personal change.

### Introduction to Peak Performance

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### Adaptive Thinking

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### Stress-Energy Management

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### Attention Control

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